



U.S. Department of Justice
United States Attorney
District of Kansas

NEWS RELEASE

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BOISE, IDAHO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO DRUG AND GUN CHARGES

TOPEKA, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that **William Joseph Lapuzza**, 22, Boise, Idaho, entered a guilty plea today before U.S. District Judge Julie A. Robinson to one count of **conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute 50 grams or more (1.76 ounces or more) of methamphetamine; one count of possessing a firearm during a drug trafficking crime; and one count of forfeiture of \$48,710 in cash, the proceeds from these offenses.**

Melgren said that Lapuzza admitted at his plea on June 9, 2004, he was a passenger in a vehicle that was stopped by a Kansas Highway Patrol trooper for a traffic violation on I-70 in Shawnee County, Kansas. Lapuzza further admitted that following a search of the vehicle, the trooper found two firearms, a bag containing \$48,710 in currency, and a jar containing methamphetamine. Lapuzza further admitted that he owned one of the firearms.

Lapuzza faces a minimum of ten years and a maximum of life in federal prison, without parole, for conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute methamphetamine and a minimum consecutive sentence of five years for possessing a firearm during a drug trafficking crime, as well as, the mandatory forfeiture of \$48,710 in currency. Sentencing is set for November 1, 2004, at 9:00 a.m.

Co-defendant **McAllister Edward Bryce**, 24, Boise, Idaho, is charged with one count of conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute 50 grams or more (1.76 ounces or more) of methamphetamine from June 6, 2004, through June 9, 2004; one count of possess with the intent to distribute 50 grams or more (1.76 ounces or more) of methamphetamine on June 9, 2004; two counts of possessing a firearm during a drug trafficking crime on June 9, 2004; and one count of forfeiture of \$48,710 in currency.

If convicted, Bryce faces a minimum of ten years and a maximum of life in federal prison, without parole, for conspiracy and possession with the intent to distribute

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methamphetamine and a minimum of five years for each count of possession a firearm during a drug trafficking crime. Trial is set for September 14, 2004, at 9:00 a.m.

Melgren commended the excellent work of the Kansas Highway Patrol and the Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force in this investigation and Assistant U.S. Attorney Greg Hough in this prosecution.

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